

April 30, 1973

SPEAKER: The chair will recognize Senator Stahmer, then Senator Richard Lewis, Fred Carstens, and Barnett. Senator Stahmer.

SENATOR STAHMER: Mr. President, members of the body, I am speaking now, perhaps, not so much either in favor of or against Senator Chambers proposal but I think a few points of information might be in order at this time. First of all, this Legislature did adopt an operating budget without coming to grips at all with its own revenue projections which the Governor preempted us in and we did not come to grips with capital construction. And I think for a family, much less a Legislature or a unit of government, to deal with part of a budget at one time is perhaps not as realistic as it could be but I would like to talk now about not what we have done but what we can do or should do or, possibly, will do, some alternatives. The Governor recommended eighteen million dollars capital construction. I am not sure that the Governor is aware, or he certainly..I don't think he was aware in his budget presentation on capital construction that we no longer need eighteen million dollars of capital construction money for an eighteen million dollar program. There is no way in God's green earth that we can spend eighteen million next year on buildings. If we adopted forty-five million dollars worth of buildings, they can't be spent that fast as a practical matter and I say that with two or three experience in the Budget Committee and knowing something about construction and how this state operates. It is spelled S-L-O-W when you talk in capital construction. I'll bet anyone in here ten to one that you can't spend eighteen million dollars in the coming fiscal year. The Governor could have asked for six million dollars to be spread over three years, six million for three years for an eighteen million dollar program which would have been realistic. He chose not to do so. If we are really interested in revenue reductions and tax reductions, we could have an eighteen million dollar construction bill, vote six million dollars for buildings not to exceed eighteen million and take the other twelve million and peel off taxes even more than we have now. Or we could take that twelve million that we don't need to spend and we can't possibly spend in the coming fiscal year, we could have voted everything we wanted to on the Board, we could have voted the amendments to the budget bill and still have money left over and I only say this to highlight the inaccuracy of the Governor when he said in Omaha, the action of the Budget Committee was forcing up the sales and income tax. Nothing could have been farther from the truth. Either he was uninformed or was not telling the truth, and he comes in within a week and then says, look here, don't look now but the revenues are running so high we can have a massive tax cut and this after this legislative body helped kill LB 123 which would give us some decent type of revenue projections. I quest in the wisdom of this Committee action that killed the chance that would have given us a more realistic revenue projections. So right now, we are in a very strange situation. We are talking eighteen million for capital when we can't possibly spend it even if we were voting thirty million dollars worth of buildings. We've got money to do almost anything we want to do and, in fact, if we wanted to we could have..adopt eighteen million dollars worth of construction and have an additional twelve million in tax cuts or use that twelve million for other purposes. I would hope in the future, in future legislatures, that there would be a little more cooperation between the Governor and the Legislature in setting taxes, in making projections and I think both sides, perhaps, have been guilty in this. In one respect I think the Governor is